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M. FROIDEVAUX'S PARIS LETTER.

PARIS, May 20, 1903.

To conclude the account of the Service Hydrographique de la Marine we must say something of the last four sections—that of Nautical Instructions, that of Scientific Instruments, that of Nautical Instruments, and that of Nautical Meteorology.

The Section of Nautical Instructions is charged with the publication of works intended to accompany the marine charts and to bring together all the information useful for the navigation of the coasts and for entering the channels and ports (data concerning the winds, the tides and currents, the buoyage, the pilotage, routes, resources of ports, etc.). By the help of similar documents issued by other maritime nations and selections from technical publications, the volumes of the Nautical Instructions, carefully revised to the time of publication, succeed each other as fast as possible. Side by side with these are the seven great volumes of the Lighthouse List, republished every year with the addition of carefully-registered corrections, and also the Notices to Mariners, the number of which constantly increases. Other works of this Section are the Hydrographic Annals (a collection of reports and memoirs on hydrography and navigation), the Supplements to Tables of Distances, established in 1881 and 1893; the International Code, dating from 1901; the books of Fleet Signals, etc.—all demanding the closest and the most sustained attention and toil on the part of the staff.

The Section of Scientific Instruments has devised and carried out since 1889 many improvements. It publishes, under the title of Researches on Chronometers and Nautical Instruments, papers on the use of astronomical, hydrographic, magnetic, and other scientific apparatus.

The Sixth Section, that of Nautical Instruments, introduced in 1886 a serious reform in the types adopted, beginning with the compasses and extending to the barometers, the telescopes, the micrometers, and adding the Banaré stigmograph for finding the ship's position when the compass is out of order.

The work of the Seventh Section, that of Nautical Meteorology, embraces: the digest and the publication of the meteorological records and the analysis of documents, such as log-books, meteorological registers, recorded observations, telegraphic and others, at

home and in the Colonies. This Section also examines the Four Weeks' Sheets, regularly kept on all war vessels, and epitomizes, in concert with the Central Meteorological Bureau, the contents of the registers filled out on merchant vessels according to a uniform model. It keeps monthly records of observations and publishes extracts from meteorological journals (particularly on the subject of cyclones) in the *Annales Hydrographiques*, calculations of currents, and notes on the surface temperatures of the North Pacific Ocean. These notes are intended to complete the important work on the same subject accomplished by Admiral Makaroff.

The Congress of Learned Societies held its Annual Meeting at Bordeaux, from the 16th to the 20th of April. In a study of the Currents of the Bay of Biscay, M. Bénard, President of the Oceanographical Society, reaches the conclusion that the Rennell Current does not exist, but that the current described by the Prince of Monaco and M. Hautreux enters the Bay on the north and leaves it on the southwest. M. Manley-Bendall reported progress in the preparation of the litho-biological map of the floor of this portion of the Atlantic.

M. Fabre, after an examination of the shingle, arrived at a new interpretation of various morphological peculiarities on the coast of Lower Gascony. M. Ch. Duffart, with the help of manuscript maps of Claude Masse, reconstructed the coast-line of the Landes at the beginning of the XVIII. Century, and M. Auguste Pawlowski performed a similar service for the Médoc region.

In historical geography, M. Emile Belloc read a communication on cairns and their still undetermined geographical signification, and M. l'Abbé Ricaud presented a paper on the districts included in the department of the Hautes-Pyrénées in 1790.

Dr. Giraud described the wild tribes of Upper Tonkin; M. Emile Belloc made a communication on fresh-water plankton, and M. Henri Lorin treated the Basque emigration and colonisation of French North Africa—a paper which found its complement in a note by M. Delmas on the commercial relations between Bordeaux and the western coast of Africa, exclusive of the Congo. Mention must be made of M. Marcel Charrol's studies on the anemometry of the Western Mediterranean basin and those of M. Montaudry on the meteorology of the Bay of Biscay.

Besides M. Stokes, whose address on the polar regions attracted general attention, the speakers at the meetings of the Société de Géographie have been Messrs. E. Gallois, Jean Duchesne-Fournet, A. Lacroix, and F. de Chevilly. The journey of M. Duchesne-

Fournet in Ethiopia is not to be overlooked. Starting from Jibuti, in company with Lieut. Collat, Dr. Goffin and the non-commissioned officers Fonteneau and Lahure, he passed through the desert of the Issa Somalis and the Danakil, Harar and the profound depression of the Hawash to Addis-Ababa, from which he turned to the north, reached the cañon of the Blue Nile and penetrated into Godjam. He returned to Addis-Ababa by way of Addis-Alem. The principal results obtained were a survey of Lake Tsana by theodolite, on a scale of 1:60,000, and the exploration of Koutaï (an outlier, so to speak, of Shoa, attached to the mountain-crest of the upper Metcha and Entotto).

M. Lacroix illustrated his report of his observations in Martinique with numerous photographs, showing the growth of the *lava dome*, shaped like a tooth or an obelisk, rising more than a thousand feet above the crater-edge of the Montagne Pelée. From the walls of the dome issue the *burning clouds*, formed by a mixture of steam, of ashes, and of blocks at a high temperature, which roll down to the sea, filling the ravines and carrying everything before them. M. Lacroix is the first savant who has studied these clouds, to which must be attributed the catastrophe of Saint Pierre. With a parallel between the eruptions of Martinique and Saint Vincent and the description of a discharge of mud from the volcano on the latter, M. Lacroix brought his address to a close. It is his opinion that, in view of the persistent activity of the Montagne Pelée and the continued production of the *burning clouds*, the principal destructive element, it will be necessary to prolong indefinitely the evacuation of the mountain slopes and the northern portion of the island, to which the ruin is confined. The rest of Martinique enjoys perfect tranquillity, and there is no reason to despair of its future.*

In Western Africa Messrs. Vasseur, Larcher, and Cardozo, of the Compagnie Française du Congo, have made interesting reconnaissances, a map of which, in the *Mouvement Géographique*, shows a part of the course of the Sanga and that of the Likuala, traced for the first time between Botungo, the farthest point reached by Captain Jobit in 1900, and Ebele, 40 to 45 minutes more to the north. M. Superville, administrator of Kotto, has explored the mountain mass which separates the Ubangi, the Bamingi, and the affluents of the Bangoran, and has made a map of his route on a scale of 1:250,000. The Chevalier Expedition has mapped the upper course of the Bamingi and all its eastern affluents and dis-

* M. Giraud, who accompanied M. Lacroix on his first visit to Martinique, and is now in the island, has lately expressed a similar opinion.

covered the source of most of these streams, and it brings reports of the existence of a large lake on the confines of Darfur, Dar Runga, and Wadai, called the Mamun; probably the Wadi Mamun recently mentioned on hearsay by the Russian traveller Potagos. Another lake is described as inhabited by lake-dwellers. It is in the same region that Captain Julien has continued his work of surveying the basins of the Bamingi, the Bangoran, and the Bakaré, and his reconnaissances in El Kuti and Ndele; and the members of the du Bourg de Bozas Expedition terminated their journey by surveying the course of the Welle between the confluence of the Kibali and the Dongu and Bomokandi. These gentlemen, Messrs. Brumpt, Golliez, and Didier, reached Paris on the 23d of March, and we shall learn before long the details of the work accomplished.

In Madagascar Captain Almand has made careful observations on the climate of Fianarantsoa for twenty consecutive months; and M. Paul Lemoine has studied the geology of the northern part of the island. In Asia the company charged with the construction of the railroad from Lao-kay to Yünnan-Hsien has decided to carry the road through the well-peopled valley of the northern branch of the upper Si-Kiang and by Yang-Ling.

In America Messrs. de Créqui-Montfort and Sénéchal de la Grange will make a scientific study of the Bolivian high plateaux, and this will be united with the work of Dr. Rivet, of the Geodetic Expedition in Ecuador.

Dr. Charcot's intended Arctic voyage, announced in my last letter, has been abandoned, in deference to the wishes of his patrons, and he will set out for the Antarctic. From Tierra del Fuego he will endeavour to reach Alexander I. Land, and will devote himself, in the sector comprised between 65° and 160° of longitude, to scientific researches bearing upon oceanography, geography, and zoology, and completing, in this way, the investment of the Antarctic, where the English are at work in Victoria Land, the Germans near Kemp and Enderby, the Swedes near Louis-Philippe Land and Gerlache Strait, and the Scots in the Weddell Sea. In the region of Alexander I. Land everything has yet to be discovered; and it may be hoped that Dr. Charcot's expedition will be fruitful in results. The presence of M. de Gerlache on board the *Pourquoi Pas?* is a happy augury; and if France still remains indifferent to Arctic enterprise, there is reason to rejoice that the heritage of Bouvet and Kerguélen and Dumont d'Urville is in good hands.

Among the many works of a geographical nature published in the last two months, considerable importance is to be attached to

M. Vidal de la Blache's Introduction to the History of France, issued under the direction of M. E. Lavis. This Introduction merits a separate notice at a later day.

Something must be said of M. Lugeon's study of the Alps of Chablais and Switzerland—a study which tends to the overthrow of the accepted theories as to the formation of the Alps. According to M. Lugeon, the Alps must be regarded as deposits, transported a distance of fifty miles from the south on the inner line of the Alpine curve, in the zone of the amphibolites of Ivrea. This hypothesis is not more bold than seductive, since it enables us to group the majority of the known facts and to arrange them in an orderly succession, and marks a real advance on the theory of fan-like diverging folds.

A work by M. de Mathuisieux, *À Travers la Tripolitaine*, is a contribution to the knowledge of a country made difficult of access by the Turkish authorities. The *Voyages au Maroc* of the Marquis de Segonzac is the record of journeys accomplished at the risk of his life, in the years 1899–1901. The book is divided into two parts: one tells the story of the author's excursions in the Rif, among the Djebala and the Braber and in the Sus; the other presents, systematically arranged by competent specialists, all the scientific information gathered, with a geographical notice by M. René de Flotte Roquevaire, the cartographical authority for this portion of North Africa and author of the excellent map, on a scale of 1:2,000,000, which accompanies the *Voyages*. There are also nine detailed maps of itineraries, on a scale of 1:250,000, and plates of sketches and profiles (separately published by Barrère). Not to be overlooked are two monographs, small, but of real value: that of M. Lacroix on the *Derkaoua*,* *Yesterday and To-Day*, and those of Dr. Huguet on the *Jews of the Mzab* and on *The Tuareg*.

In the *Renseignements Coloniaux et Documents* for May, the Comité de l'Afrique Française has finished the account of M. Thomann's journey from the Ivory Coast to the French Sudan, in 1901–1902, and gives a map of the basin of the Sassandra, on the scale of 1:500,000.

Another map of special importance is that brought out by Commandant Baratier, under the auspices of the Société de Géographie, showing, on a scale of 1:1,000,000, the route of the Marchand Expedition from the upper Ubangi to Jibuti, across the basins of the

* The Derkaoua are a religious brotherhood whose doctrines enforce abstinence from every earthly ambition and an absolute detachment from the concerns of this world.

Bahr el Ghazal and the Nile, and Ethiopia. It must be regretted that this valuable map does not give the complete line of march followed by the Bonchamp party. When are we to see the account of the journey?

I must not close without noting the appearance of Dr. E. T. Hamy's Fifth and Sixth Decades of Memoirs of American Archæology and Ethnography, published under the title of *Decades Americanae*.

HENRI FROIDEVAUX.

ACCESSIONS TO THE LIBRARY.

MAY-JUNE, 1903.

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